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Current Events

[Edited by Clarence W. Gleason, Roxbury Latin School, Roxbury, Mass., for the territory covered by the Association of New England and the Atlantic States; Daniel W. Lothman, East High School, Cleveland, Ohio, for the Middle States, west to the Mississippi River; Walter Miller, University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., for the Southern States; and by Frederick C. Eastman, the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, for the territory west of the Mississippi, exclusive of Louisiana and Texas. This department will present everything that is properly news—occurrences from month to month, meetings, changes in faculties, performances of various kinds, etc. All news items should be sent to the associate editors named above.]

Georgia

Bessie Tift College.—The Junior class of Bessie Tift College, Forsyth, Georgia, presented the *Electra* of Euripides on the evening of February 19. The verse translation of Gilbert Murray was used, as the tragedy was produced as a supplement to the study of ancient classic plays that forms a part of the English course. The ideals of the Attic stage were expressed in the simplicity of the open-air setting, which remained unchanged, no less than in the strict adherence to the stately character of ancient tragedy. The vine-covered hut, with thatched roof, with the forest of the painted canvas and a few living trees, constituted the scenic background. Of this picture of the Argos country the peasant appeared an integral part, as with his short leathern tunic and his long shepherd's crook he appeared at early dawn. The actors were given an appearance of greater height and dignity by the long, flowing robes of the himation together with the short chlamys flung gracefully over the left shoulder. The brilliant colors of mantles and tunics contributed to the spectacular effect. The bright hues that prevailed in the costumes of the other actors brought out in sharp contrast Orestes' sober garb and the severe black robe that from the first marked Electra as the child of misfortune. The whole was softened by the pale blues and lavenders and greens of the chorus of Argive women in their festal dress.

A distinguishing characteristic of the performance was the manifestation of creative ability on the part of the students, who had themselves made the costumes and contrived the scenery. In the absence of the stage properties of the Attic theater, several expedients were resorted to: Clytaemnestra's chariot did not appear upon the stage; instead, the queen and her attendants were represented as having alighted before their entrance. For the *eccyclema*, thralls bore upon the stage the biers upon which lay the bodies of the dead king and queen. At the close of the play, as a substitute for *deus ex machina*, Castor was seen to enter from the side encircled in dazzling light. In general, the performance brought out strongly the effort of Greek tragedy to concentrate upon the central character. From first to last the black-robed, regal Electra

dominated the stage. The subordinate actors and the chorus fell sympathetically into harmony with the design of the play, serving mainly to call forth the passions of Electra and to bring into sharp relief the impressiveness of her tragic figure.

Illinois

Chicago.—The Twenty-seventh Educational Conference of Academies and High Schools with the University of Chicago was held on April 16. The conference divided itself into departmental groups but the discussions of all the groups centered around the general topic: The relation of the organized library to the school. Following is the program in detail of the Greek and Latin section, held (and this for the first time) in the new Classics Building.

1. Unfinished Business.

- a) Report on simplified texts. Elsie Flersheim, Medill High School.
- b) Report on word-groups. Walter E. Johnson, Lane Technical High School.
- c) General discussion.

2. The Relation of the Organized Library to Latin in Secondary Schools.

Library Material:

- a) A list of the best twenty books for reference in the high-school course in Latin including title, date, publishers, price, and a brief statement about each book. H. F. Scott, University High School.
- b) Periodicals and recent articles of interest to teachers of Latin. Clara G. Sullivan, J. Sterling Morton High School, Cicero, Illinois.
- c) The use of library materials in topical studies. Mary Zimmerman, John Marshall High School.
- d) The use of maps, pictures, post-cards, perception-cards, charts, games, museum materials, entertainments, clubs, etc. Laura B. Woodruff, Oak Park High School, Oak Park, Illinois.

Indiana

Union City.—Recently a unique meeting was held by the Latin club of the Union City High School in honor of the German club of the school. The halls and stairways of the school were lighted with long white candles. At the head of the stairs stood a white-draped altar, upon which burned candles and incense. The altar was presided over by a white-clad filleted priest of Apollo who received offerings to the gods and gave in return a program of the evening's entertainment, printed in Latin. A short, interesting program, consisting of the reading of papers and the singing of Latin and German songs, was given in the candle-lighted assembly hall classic with its altars and statuary.

After the program the Latin room, draped simply in white, lighted only by large candelabra containing dozens of white tapers, was thrown open to the sixty or more guests. Two pages in tunics and sandals crowned each guest with a chaplet of ivy leaves. The dinner, served according to a printed Latin menu, consisted of the conventional three parts: *gustus*, *cena*, and *secunda cena*. It was served by waiters wearing togas and chaplets. The guests expressed

themselves as delighted with the novel effect of the whole affair. Its success was due largely, no doubt, to the fact that it was so entirely free from a modern atmosphere.

Kansas

The Classical Association of Kansas and Western Missouri held its ninth annual meeting with Bethany College at Lindsborg, March 26 and 27. It was a meeting noteworthy for the keen interest manifested and the large number of participants in the open discussions. The program follows: Friday night: Address of Welcome, Dr. E. F. Pihlblad, president, Bethany College; Illustrated Lecture, "Picturesque and Historic Sicily," Dr. Walter Miller, University of Missouri; Saturday morning: President's Address, "Our Possibility in the Study of Ancient Languages," Dr. Irene Nye, Washburn College, Topeka; "An Attempt to Establish a Uniform Grammatical Nomenclature," Miss Lulu Grosh, Wichita High School; "Supervised Study," Miss Martha Thompson, Kansas City (Kan.) High School; "The Teaching of Prose Composition," Mr. W. T. McDonald, Topeka High School; "Library Helps for the High-School Latin Teacher," Dr. E. D. Cressman, University of Kansas; Saturday afternoon: "Seven Greek Allegories and Modern Parallels," Professor Homer K. Ebright, Baker University, Baldwin; Illustrated Lecture, "Athens' Rival in the West," Dr. Walter Miller.

The officers of the Association were: President, Miss Irene Nye, Washburn College; Vice-President, Walter Petersen, Bethany College; Secretary-Treasurer, F. C. Shaw, Westport High School, Kansas City, Missouri; Executive Committee, the foregoing officers and Miss Martha Whitney, Wichita High School; A. L. Wolfe, Park College, Parkville, Missouri.

New York

Rochester.—The "Roman State" of the East High School of Rochester signalized the tenth year of its existence by the presentation of the *Alcestis* of Euripides, in English. This ambitious undertaking proved more successful than had even been hoped. The performance was witnessed by a large and interested audience and held the spectators from beginning to end. To many of the audience, who perhaps came with the feeling that a Greek play was "something one ought to see" rather than something really enjoyable, it must have been a surprise to see how vital and gripping is Euripides played more than two thousand years after it was written. The universal appeal of the emotions portrayed was quite as strong as in any play of Shakespeare's, despite the feeling which one is likely to have that the Greek tragedies are somehow very remote from our modern sphere of ideas. The only liberty taken with the play was the substitution of a chorus of Greek maidens for the chorus of elders in the original. This was not a radical departure, however, as choruses in many of Euripides' other dramas were composed of women. The flowing draperies and filleted hair of the members of the chorus added a very picturesque touch to the performance, and the beautiful setting to the choral odes made the

musical side of the production notable. The music used for the choruses was composed by Charles H. Lloyd for the performance of the *Alcestis* at Oxford in 1887, and appropriately expressed the changing phases of the tragedy. The translation followed was that of Arthur S. Way. The play was presented under the general direction of Dr. Mason D. Gray, head of the classical department of East High School, and was under the auspices of the Rochester Society of the Archaeological Institute of America. It attracted considerable attention and interest outside of school circles, among people interested in things classical, and, to quote one of the Rochester papers, "sounded a new note in the advance of educational dramatics in Rochester."

The cast did excellent work for amateur performers and the beautiful lines of the play were given effective rendition. It is a matter of interest that the two leading rôles of Admetus and Alcestis were taken by the two consuls of the "Roman State." The scenery for the play, representing the front of the palace of Admetus, was especially made for the production.

The signal success of the performance has given rise to the suggestion that the play be repeated in an outdoor performance some time in the spring, possibly in one of the public parks of the city. If this is done, the production might approach the Attic model as closely in the externals of setting and scenery as it did this time in the essentials of spirit and feeling.

Ohio

Cleveland.—Recently the teachers and pupils of the Latin department of the Glenville High School, Cleveland, prepared an exhibit to show the practical value of the study of Latin. The exhibit was patterned after that of Miss Sabin, given three years ago in Cincinnati at the meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, and the information used was based largely on the material in her book *The Relation of Latin to Practical Life*. An interesting section of the exhibit was devoted to a comparison between ancient classical art and architecture, and art and architecture of today. Another section was devoted to an exhibit of letters received for the occasion from eminent men who testified to the value of the study of Latin by telling in what way or to what extent they themselves had profited by such study.

The most original feature of the exhibit, however, and the one which received most attention was the reproduction of a Pompeian room. By means of white pillars, numerous palms, some beautiful pieces of statuary, and a little additional decorating, the library of the school was made to have the appearance of a real Pompeian apartment. The presence of boys and girls in Roman attire to direct visitors and dispense hospitality gave the room all the more a classical resemblance. During the afternoon and evening the rooms of the exhibit were almost continuously crowded with pupils, their parents, and teachers from Glenville High School and from other schools of the city. At least, judged from the standpoint of attendance and enthusiasm manifested, the exhibit was a complete success. The work was done under the general direction of Miss Elizabeth McGorey, one of the teachers of Latin of the school.